

Here to serve



Alisha Anker
General Manager

We are a co-op, and we exist to provide a service to you, our local members. Menard Electric is governed locally, by directors who also live right here in our community. When you pay your electric bill each month, your money stays here — to pay for the electricity used, or to make improvements to our

local system to strengthen service reliability. The money you pay the co-op doesn't line the pockets of shareholders five states away.

Because you are part of an electric cooperative, you can count on our team to maintain local jobs, at-cost electricity and first-class service.

We exist to serve you and provide the safe, reliable, affordable service you expect and deserve. This co-op was created for you, the members, and we are here to serve you.



Scholarships



\$2,000 scholarships for students enrolling full-time in a 2-year or 4-year university, college or vocational/technical school are available through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives Memorial Scholarship program. Deadline is Dec. 31, 2023.

A \$2,000 LLCC Lineworker Program scholarship is also available through the LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship Fund. Deadline is Apr. 30, 2024.

See details at
www.menard.com/scholarships.

Check back in January to apply for another scholarship opportunity directly through Menard Electric.



LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) could help pay your electric, gas and propane energy bills. Contact your local agency to confirm income eligibility requirements and application timelines.

Program timelines

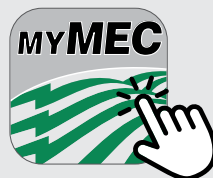
- **Oct. 2** — persons over the age of 60, disabled, and households with children under 6 may apply.
- **Nov. 1** — households disconnected/have disconnect notice may apply.
- **Dec. 1** — general population may apply.

Contact information

- MCS Community Services, Cass/Morgan County, 217-243-9404, morgancounty-il.com
- Community Action Partnership of Central Illinois, Logan/Mason/Menard County, 217-732-2159, capcil.info
- Sangamon County, 217-535-3120, co.sangamon.il.us/communityresources
- Tazwood Community Services, Tazewell County, 309-266-9941, tazwoodcs.org

Budget Billing

Budget Billing averages the last 12 months of usage and determines a monthly budget amount. We bill that same amount each month for 11 months and on the 12th month settle up the account with a credit or additional balance due depending on actual electricity used for the year. E-mail info@menard.com or call 800-872-1203 with your account number to be added to the fall cycle.



Reporting outages

Quickly report outages through our MyMEC app. It also allows us to send notifications of outage restoration updates and provides a link to our secure account portal.

Getting ready for the holiday season? Be festive without breaking the bank

- * LED holiday lights use 88% less energy than incandescent holiday lights. To put that into perspective, the Department of Energy estimates that with standard holiday decorations, LED lights typically increase energy bills by about \$5 to \$7. But with incandescent lights, energy bills will typically increase by \$33 or more. For homes that go above and beyond with incandescent holiday lighting (think Clark Griswold), energy bills could increase by as much as \$350. Beyond energy savings, LEDs provide additional benefits, such as being shock-resistant, shatterproof and cool to the touch, making them safer for the home.
- * Smart light timers can help you save energy by connecting to a smartphone app or voice assistant to program lights to turn on and off at set times. If you don't use smart home technology, you can still save energy by using traditional timers.
- * Additional easy ways to save during the holiday season include turning off overhead lights and using your Christmas tree to illuminate your home. If you have a fireplace, remember to close the flue when you're not burning a fire to ensure heat doesn't escape through the chimney.

Entertaining this month?

Cook up energy savings in the kitchen



- * Use small countertop appliances like microwaves, air fryers and slow cookers when possible, as they use much less energy than the stovetop or oven.
- * When using the oven, bake multiple dishes at once for maximum efficiency. After all, it takes as much energy to cook one dish as it does to cook several.
- * Turn the oven off a few minutes before the recipe's end time and allow the residual heat to finish baking the dish. Once the food is done, leave the stove door ajar to allow the residual heat to warm the room.
- * When using the stovetop, match the pan size to the burner to maximize the stove top's efficiency.

Office closings

Our office will be closed for the following holidays:

Veterans Day
Nov. 10

Thanksgiving
Nov. 23-24

Play it safe:

10 do's and don'ts when using portable generators

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

1. **DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
2. **DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
3. **DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
4. **DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
5. **DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
6. **DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space.



Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.

7. **DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
8. **DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
9. **DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.

10. **DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.



5 WAYS TO SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME THIS WINTER

- 1 Ensure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly.
- 2 Inspect electrical cords for fraying/cracking.
- 3 Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips.
- 4 Clean the fireplace to improve safety and efficiency.
- 5 Keep space heaters 3 feet from flammable items.

Board highlights

For full minutes visit menard.com or contact the office.

Aug. 22, 2023

- All directors present in person/zoom; also General Manager Alisha Anker & Attorney Charles Smith.
- Goetsch reviewed Board Committee Appointments; made no changes.
- Anker reviewed general terms of alternative proposed by Ameren to determine service rights to providing station power load to distributed energy resource projects developed partially in Ameren & co-op service territories.
- Anker reviewed July monthly & YTD financial trends. Operating margins \$2,665,547 compared to \$1,476,859 last year; equity at 41.54%; 12-mo TIER 3.35 & DSC 2.23.
- Reviewed Operations Report w/102 incidents; longest outage 326 min. due to bad transformer affected 1 member; largest # affected by single outage 1,087 due to substation transformer fuse & lasted 57 min.
- Holloway named Delegate & McMillan Alternate for CFC District V meeting.
- Approved changes recommended by Bylaw/Policy Committee.
- Next mtg 9/26/23.

Kilo Watt Korner

The kitchen stovetop



The kitchen stovetop is a fairly simple, no-nonsense appliance — however, more and more media headlines are being made over the use of certain energy types across the country. Knowing there to be a fierce division over the preference to cook on a gas stovetop versus an electric stovetop, and now considering induction stovetops are all the rage, we take a deeper dive this month into some pros and cons of their features, and more importantly, the leader in energy savings.

Gas stovetops have been around for decades, long before the introduction of electricity to modern appliances. Flammable gas is ignited at the burner to transfer heat to pots and pans. Positive features include a better controlled heat output with quicker reaction that is more evenly dispersed across the cookware. Yet the use of gas may contribute to indoor

air pollution, thus the insistence in some states to ban gas use going forward in new homes. As for energy use, gas as an energy source is measured in BTUs, and the typical gas burner when in use averages 12,000 BTUs. Cooking for an hour per day, at today's gas prices, is approximately \$30 per month.

An electric stovetop is operated by applying an amperage (flow of electricity) to resistive metal coils. An increase in amperage increases heat output of the coil and thereby transfers

heat to cookware. Positive features include heat being applied more directly to the cookware with less ambient heat lost to the kitchen. Yet, the use of radiant electric burners, whether under glass surfaces or not, can be more difficult to gauge as the reaction time is slower when compared to gas; therefore, an impatient chef may be prone to burning his or her meal if not careful. Energy use varies by burner size; the average requires 1,500 watts. When used for an hour per day, at today's electricity prices, the cost is approximately \$5.50 per month.

An induction stovetop provides the best of both worlds by utilizing electromagnetism to cut out the heat transfer concept altogether. A flow of electricity is applied to a metal coil to generate an electromagnetic current that excites particles in induction-specific (ferrous) cookware to heat food or water immediately. On the positive side, no residual heat is created whatsoever, meaning no nasty stovetop burns and a more precise temperature control in an instant. However, the transition to induction comes with the price tag for new cookware. While the wattage of an average induction burner mirrors that of an electric stovetop, the time requirement for cooking is greatly reduced. Studies indicate induction is 20% to 30% more efficient than electric or gas stovetops, respectively. Thus, the cost of induction is approximately \$4.40 per month.

KW Korner recommendation: Take some time to research all variables of the different options available when choosing a new stove.

